

APPLICATIONS OF PSYCHOLOGY TO THE CLASSIFICATION OF RACES

by Doctor Gustave Le Bon

ROBERT K. STEVENSON: Translator and Editor



PREFACE

The works of Dr. Gustave Le Bon (1841-1931), arguably history's greatest forgotten scientist, show clearly that over 125 years ago science had already conclusively proven that the races of mankind, by their varying physical, psychological, and intellectual qualities, differ substantially from one another. As evidence of this fact, one does not need to look any further than Dr. Le Bon's sensational 1879 masterpiece, "Anatomical and Mathematical Researches into the Laws of the Variations of Brain Volume and Their Relation to Intelligence," which at the time was accorded an award by the French Academy of Sciences, but which nowadays has been consigned to oblivion.

Today I present to you another masterful work of Dr. Le Bon's, similarly so consigned, his remarkably incisive "Applications of Psychology to the Classification of Races." Published in 1886 in *Revue Philosophique*, the author begins his paper with an explanation and presentation of relevant fundamental truths, such as: "The outcome of race-mixing is entirely harmful if the elements which are joined together strongly differ by their civilization, their past, and their character." He then demonstrates how a properly-designed analytical approach can accurately determine the general psychological make-up of a particular people--in this case, the Hindus of India serve as Dr. Le Bon's example.

Besides his being a very extraordinary scientist (he was the founder, in fact, of Social Psychology), Dr. Le Bon was an activist who tirelessly and effectively championed rational social policies. He did so, not just by his writings, but also by constantly meeting with and influencing the leading conservative and pragmatic politicians of his day (one close friend of his was President Theodore Roosevelt).

Were Dr. Le Bon with us today, it is most certain that he would proclaim that what is now needed, as his classic 19th Century works so well highlight, is not additional "beat a dead horse" research into defining racial differences. Instead, he would urge each and every one of us to focus our energies on taking *practical action* directed towards the *introduction and adoption of laws* which: 1) provide incentives for increasing the numbers of those individuals which science has revealed are highly likely to lead productive, responsible, law-abiding lives, and 2) strongly penalize, or at least stop rewarding or subsidizing, those individuals who, for whatever reason, engage in unproductive and/or irresponsible and/or criminalistic behavior.

Robert K. Stevenson (translator, editor)

REVUE PHILOSOPHIQUE
(July, 1886)

APPLICATIONS OF PSYCHOLOGY TO THE CLASSIFICATION OF RACES

The Races of India

I

The agglomerations of men spread over the surface of the globe have been divided into a certain number of groups to which one has given the name of races. In the present state of science this term "race" as applied to man must be considered as the equivalent of the word "species" as applied to animals. In reality, the diverse races of men are separated like slices by their distinctive qualities, much like such distinctions separate neighboring animal species. These qualities possess the fundamental peculiarity of reproducing themselves by heredity with regularity and constancy.

If the term "race" is synonymous with the word "species," it is not in any way the equivalent of the one for "people." A people is most often nothing but a mass of races which political, geographical, and other causes have brought together under a sole government. Terms such as the following: Hindus, French, Austrians, etc., simply designate groups of very different races who happen to inhabit the same country and are subject to a certain number of common political institutions, and who by consequence have common interests.

One can ascertain in all the human races, in the same way, moreover, as in the different animal species, two orders of qualities of most unequal importance. These are, on the one hand, the ancestral qualities bequeathed by heredity, and therefore furnished at birth; and, on the other hand, those qualities acquired during the brief duration of the life of the individual, under the influence of the milieu, education and other diverse causes. The former represent the heritage of the entire race, that is to say, the weight of a past of immense length. The individual brings the ancestral qualities with him upon coming into this world; what he will be able to add to them during the course of his existence will always be very little. New aptitudes acquired by each generation cannot but vie against the formidable burdens of the past which have been accumulated in like sense over the centuries. It is these successive additions, sorted out by selection and accumulated during the course of the ages, to which the slow, but profound evolution of the species is obliged.

We have investigated in various works how different races whose political circumstances

have formed into a single people are able to develop into and compose in the long run a sole race. We have seen that they attained this only when the environment, the cross-breedings, and the hereditary transmissions have established in them, by the action of centuries, a certain number of common physical, moral, and intellectual qualities.

We have demonstrated that two fundamental conditions are necessary for realizing this fixation of qualities; the first, that the hereditary changes have been accomplished slowly; the second, that there is not too large an inequality in the proportion of the races being blended.

This second condition is of very great importance. A small group of white people, transported into a mass of negroes, rapidly disappears. In this manner, without exception, have vanished all the conquerors who have overrun too numerous populations, the Arabs in Egypt, for example. Arabic in his language, religion, and institutions, these days the Egyptian is, in reality, the descendant of his early ancestors from the time of the Pharaohs, which is demonstrated by his resemblance to the engraved images on the bas-reliefs of the temples and tombs.

The influence of the environment so much invoked in former times to explain transformations of the human races is, in fact, quite weak; it hardly acts much but after the accumulation of centuries, which takes us back to remote ages where there is no recorded history. The action of the environment is much too weak today to modify qualities firmly fixed by heredity: it is for this reason that in all latitudes the sons of Israel have maintained their invariable type.

Qualities established by heredity are so stable that, if an ancient race is transported into an environment necessitating profound transformations, it perishes rather than transforming itself. Acclimatization is a vain chimera. Never, in spite of observing all the rules of hygiene, have the English been able to acclimate themselves to India; if they could not raise their children in Europe, the immense peninsula would not give count to a single European by the third generation. Heredity is only able to struggle against heredity; the environment never possesses a similar power over it.

Granted that the action of the environment is very weak, still it exists; in the meantime only heredity supplies powerful contests. When, according to the second of the previously indicated conditions, in order to permit the fusion of two races, the elements brought face to face are not disproportionate, the heavy influences of the past find themselves dissociated by contrary hereditary influences of an equal weight, and the environment, not having to contend with them, can freely operate.

Here we are then led to this first conclusion--that it is only by the intermixing of different races, and not at all by the action of the environment alone, that new races are able to take shape. But here we find ourselves in the presence of a question whose practical interest is considerable, because upon its solution depends most often the future of a people. The question is the following: What will be the value of the new race so formed? If it is equal or superior to the most advanced races in existence, it is evident that the mixture is advantageous. It is no less obvious that it will be detrimental in the contrary case, at least to the superior race participating in the intermixing.

We have examined in detail this fundamental question in previous research works, and shall here recall only the conclusions. In dwelling upon our study of the results occasioned by these melanges found within the diverse countries of the globe, we have come to understand that they are, depending on the circumstances, advantageous or disadvantageous. They are advantageous, if the elements brought face to face, instead of being in opposition to one another, coalesce in a way to form a homogeneous whole. Such are the elements whose combination formed the English race and the American, for example. The outcome of race-mixing is entirely harmful if the elements which are joined together strongly differ by their civilization, their past, and their character. The crossings of the white and the black, of the Hindu and the European, have proven to be such a case. The fatal results engendered by the intermixing between much too different peoples were, moreover, perfectly known to the ancient conquerors of India, and were probably the origin of the caste system, the basis of this peninsula's social institutions for the last 2,000 years.

We have studied elsewhere these intermixings, along with the political and social consequences emanating from the different cases which can present themselves, and we have seen that they are the most energetic factors responsible for the decline of peoples and empires. We have also researched what could result from the face to face encounter of two races where one reduces to servitude the other, and we were able to see why with a certain degree of variation existing between the two peoples the foreign domination can be easily accepted, as was the case with the Moslems in India, being that 50 million Hindus have adopted the law of the Prophet; and why, on the other hand, with a different degree of variation, the domination can be supported only with great difficulty. The latter case applies to the English in India. In spite of a century of occupation they still have not been able to make their subjects accept the two elements which always initiate the assimilation of a people: the religion and the language.

I shall not persist any further with these generalities applicable to all peoples, as they were sufficiently developed in the introduction to my work about the history of civilizations.¹ Setting aside that which concerns the formation of races, we shall now direct ourselves to researching the qualities which allow for their differentiation.

II

It seems evident, at first sight, that the most important qualities which help to distinguish the human races from one another must be anatomical qualities, skin and hair color, the shape of the skull, for example. It appears obvious because these qualities are immediately visible. But when one endeavors to thoroughly examine their value, one finds out very quickly that they do not allow for but entirely crude divisions. With the color of the skin and that of the hair, one can divide all the inhabitants of the globe into four or five groups at most. With the shape of the skull, one can subdivide each of these groups into two or three others, and it will then be impossible to go any further. To divide the whites, that is to say all the peoples of Europe,

¹ *L'homme et les sociétés. Leur origins et leur histoire.* 2 vol. 1881.

into blonds and brunettes, or into brachycephalics and dolichocephalics, tells us almost nothing about them, because these divisions combine within the same group peoples so different, such as the French, English, Russians, Germans, etc.

Anatomical qualities are therefore absolutely insufficient in order to differentiate the human races. What we know about the diversity of races which often contributes to the formation of a single people proves that the language, the religion, and political groupings are not preferable classification elements.

Those elements of classification which the religion, the language, political groupings, and the anatomical qualities would not know how to provide us, the moral and intellectual qualities alone will be able to produce for us. The latter are the expression of the mental constitution of a people, a constitution in harmony with a special anatomical structure of the brain, which is much too delicate to be estimated today by our instruments.

It matters little, besides, from the point of view that occupies us whether we are able to see this structure, as long as we are able at least to clearly appreciate the intellectual and moral aptitudes which are its expression.

These moral and intellectual qualities determine the evolution of a people and the role that they play in history. Consequently, their importance is fundamental. It is therefore by their study, much more than that of the anatomical qualities, that the observer must apply himself in order to know a people.

It is not the shape of the skull nor the cephalic index which permits us to distinguish a valiant Rajput from a faint-hearted Bengali; the study of their sentiments alone can immediately reveal to us the depth of the abyss that exists between them. One could compare for a long time the skulls of the English and Hindus without arriving at the discovery of how 250 million of the latter could have been dominated by a few thousand of the former, whereas the study of the moral and intellectual qualities of the two peoples immediately reveals to us one of the principal causes of this domination, showing us to what degree the perseverance and the will are well-developed with the one and, on the other hand, weakly-developed with the other.

The intellectual and moral aptitudes represent the entire heritage of a race, what I have elsewhere called the voice of the dead, and are therefore the fundamental motive powers of direction. The institutions are created by these motive powers, and it is but only by them that they can be formed. Undoubtedly, these vary among individuals of the same race, just as features of the face also vary; but the majority of individuals of a race always possess a certain number of common moral and intellectual qualities, as stable as the anatomical qualities which allow for the determination of a species.

Modern anatomy instructs us that the body of living beings is composed of millions of cells of which each has an independent life, constantly being renewed, and whose continuance is therefore always subordinate to the living being which it contributes to form. A race, likewise, can be considered as a single entity composed of the union of millions of individuals always renewing

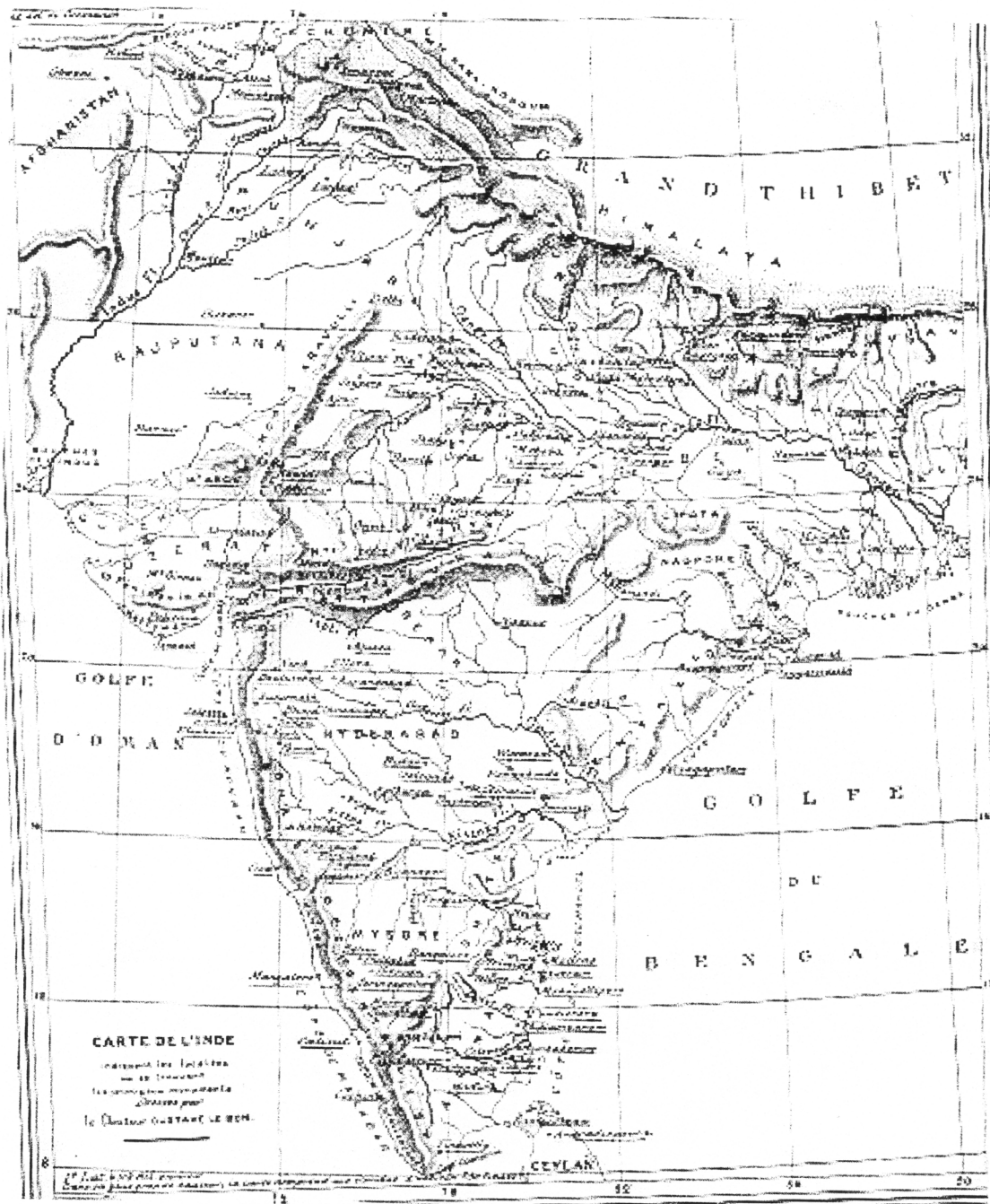
that which they make up. Each of these individuals has his own life; but, the collective being that forms a race possesses each person for the benefit of its general existence and universal qualities, and it is these qualities which one must interest oneself in when studying a race's history.

At the moment when psychology begins comparing peoples and how they are constituted, a science which does not exist yet, the observer will above all make an effort to disentangle from the various specific qualities the general qualities which allow for the creation of the ideal average type, the incarnation of a people--an average type which all individuals more or less deviate from, but which, by an irrevocable law, they always tend to draw near again.¹ Man is not only, indeed, the son of his parents; he is furthermore and chiefly the inheritor of his race.

The common qualities observed in diverse individuals composing a people are clearly very numerous when a people is composed of quite homogeneous elements. If the elements are heterogeneous and weakly mixed, the common qualities are naturally a lot less numerous. Making use of our comparisons of natural history classifications, we can say that groups which compose a homogeneous people may be likened to varieties of the same species, while groups which form a not very homogeneous people represent species more or less distinct from the same kind.

The assembly of these common qualities, which one finds among the largest number of persons who compose a people, forms the average type of this people. 1,000 French or 1,000 English taken at random no doubt differ greatly between each other, but they possess common qualities permitting for the construction of the ideal French or English type, analogous to the ideal type that the naturalist has in view when he describes in a general way the dog or horse genus. Applicable to all dogs and to all horses, his description only includes qualities common to all and by no means does it include that which enables one to differentiate their numerous varieties.

¹ One might suppose that this average type must quickly improve itself because of the selection process, which chooses from each generation the superior individuals, and from heredity, which accumulates the superior individuals' qualities in their descendants; but the tendency of individuals to progressively differentiate amongst themselves, which is the immediate consequence of the progress of civilization, must continually struggle against the laws of heredity--laws which conduce to make disappear or at the very least to bring all individuals who exceeded the average type back to the race's most numerous inferior group. One of the most interesting and at the same time saddest facts brought to light by modern research is this one: that the highest levels of society--I mean highest by their intelligence and talent--soon become exhausted and disappear, either for lack of descendants or more likely via one of those regressive evolutions which have led so many of the great families to imbecility and madness. This fact perhaps can be accounted for by admitting that a superiority in one of the senses is obtainable only at the price of an inferiority and in consequence of a degeneracy in the other senses. This disequilibrium soon manifests itself among the descendants, inevitably leading to their disappearance. History shows us that societies seem equally submissive to this irrevocable law of not being able to rise above a certain level after a very long period. They too obey the supreme law which governs all living beings: to undergo birth, growth, decline, and death. Disequilibrium elevates individuals, but leads, when it accentuates itself, to the abasement of societies and their rapid destruction. Whenever the disequilibrium becomes too general, whether by the action of moral causes, or because of cross-breedings between individuals who are much too different or way too similar, or by the action of any other factor, the hour of decline is near. For certain European nations the bells are tolling.



1886 Map of India

III

Before examining the resources which the psychological qualities can furnish us for the classification of the Hindus, let us investigate the indications that the anatomical qualities are able to provide.

It has been a very long time since one could seriously consider India as a single country, presenting everywhere the same general qualities, and inhabited by a single race, whose religion, civilization, and arts appeared identical and immutable for centuries.

This erroneous opinion is certainly unable to withstand scrutiny today. A very deep study of India will prove how great the variety of aspects is, the climates and conditions of existence throughout this vast land, for example. Man, with his diverse types, ideas, morals, and degrees of civilization, is as multifarious and different as the environment which surrounds him; and, if we can say of India that it is by its contrasts an abridgment of the universe, we can also say that its present inhabitants recapitulate and reunite side by side, with contrasts no less striking, all the successive eras of the history of mankind.

The human being appears here in types which are the most opposite, as one observes here dark-skinned savages living near populations almost as white as the Europeans. One can study here all the phases of the world's evolution, from the primitive barbarity of certain central mountainous regions, up to the brilliant civilization of the sumptuous and cultured cities along the banks of the Ganges, possessing the very refinements of modern times supplied by the latest conquerors.

The 250 million people that we designate in Europe under the general denomination as Hindus can be anatomically grouped into large families of completely different races: the Negro race, the yellow race, the Turanian race, and the Aryan race. But the inter-breeding in quite diverse proportions of these four fundamental elements, combined with the influences of highly diversified milieus, has given birth throughout India to a crowd of secondary races, more numerous and more distinct than those which populate, for example, the entire European continent.

The term *Hindu*, from the ethnologic point of view, absolutely does not make any sense. In India itself, it simply denotes any individual who is not Moslem, nor Christian or Jewish or Parsi, and who can be attached to one of the castes created by the Brahmanic religion and indeed acknowledged, if not in principle, by the Buddhists themselves. Today's innumerable castes were originally but four in number, that of the Brahmans or priests, the Kshatriyas or warriors, the Vaisyas or merchants, and the Sudras or farmers. Without totally corresponding to divisions of race, they provide useful indications of their origin. The Brahman is more or less Aryan; the Kshatriya, Rajput; the Vaisya, Turanian; and the Sudra, mixed descendant of Turanians and aborigines.

The most ancient inhabitants of India were blacks. It seems that in very remote times they were split into two groups: the negritos, small in stature, with woolly hair and crushed facial features, lived in the East and the center; and the negroes, of Australian type, larger and more intelligent, with sleeker hair, inhabited the South and the West. The former can still be met with in some of the wild and mountainous regions of Gondwana, and the latter in the valleys of the Nilgiris. These primitive and uncultured races, which never rose to the most elementary state of development, occupied the forests and waterways of India during the prehistoric period; driven back each day by the progress of civilization, they tend more and more to disappear.

India is a closed country, with a most difficult access. The Himalayas and the sea isolate it almost entirely from the world. Its coasts on the Bay of Bengal are rendered unapproachable by a formidable surf; along the coast of the Arabian Sea monsoon winds are able sometimes to drive away from the shores the boats of African adventurers; but these outsiders find themselves stopped in their first steps by the wall of the Western Ghats, in the cover of which the populations of the plateau, even very imperfectly armed, are able to brave them without danger.

All idea of a maritime invasion of India at any period would be immediately discarded upon one seeing that its foreign conquerors had never been able to penetrate the peninsula but via the Himalayas. This gigantic rampart protects India with its immense length, but it declines at its two extremities; two valleys, that of the Brahmaputra in the East and the Kabul River in the West, become wider at their base, and wind through its colossal wall; it is through them that over the centuries floods of Asiatic conquerors hurled themselves into the fertile plains of Hindustan. The most numerous, the most terrible, came down from the West; for of these two routes, the easiest to follow is that which forms the banks of the Kabul River; the course of the Brahmaputra, still hardly known, traverses regions where untamed nature stops the march of man by its disorderly vegetation and evervating climate.

Notwithstanding this difference between the two valleys, the English have bestowed on them a double designation which, without being absolutely exact, indicates in a striking fashion their character so important from the point of view of the geography of India and in the way which this large country is people; they have named them the *Aryan gateway* and the *Turanian gateway*.

The "Turanian gateway," or valley of the Brahmaputra, does not confer a point of passage to the Turanians in the restricted sense, but in the general sense of the word. The name Turanians, which designates most especially the people of Turkestan (or Turan) and those who resemble them, is in fact occasionally extended to the entire yellow race. They were truly yellow, with hairless face and slanting eyes, those who passed through the "Turanian gateway" into India in prehistoric times. The Turanians properly speaking, whose hair is sleek, beard sufficiently complete, and eyes horizontal, didn't arrive but later, and it is by the "Aryan gateway" that the torrent of their invasions engulfed the plains.

But before speaking of the latter, let's see what became in India of this pure yellow element, and what traces it left behind here.

Removing themselves from the valley of the Brahmaputra and directing themselves towards the South, the first invaders of India found their trek arrested by the obstacle that the central massif placed in opposition. This mountainous region, the culminating point of the peninsula, is that which today bears the name Gondwana. It serves as a refuge for those dark populations too weak to defend themselves; the cover which they find here manifests its security less from its ruggedness and untamed nature than from its dangerous climate, mortal to strangers.

The yellow invasion, in this manner stopped, divided itself into two branches, of which one went up the valley of the Ganges, while that of the other continued its march towards the South and proceeded along the coast of the Bay of Bengal.

The first melanges between the Asiatic conquerors and the negroes of India resulted in the populations called proto-Dravidians, which one may consider as nearly indigenous, given the preponderance of the primitive element. The new waves of invaders drove back in turn these populations into the mountains, and spread out over all the southern part of the peninsula, bringing about another set of combinations among the races. This time the union did not take place more directly with the blacks, but with the proto-Dravidians, giving birth to peoples who deviated further from the primitive type, and who are named Dravidians or Tamils.

If one then looks into the major facts concerning the influence of the yellow invasion upon the races of India, one will see that this influence predominates in the North, throughout the valley of the Brahmaputra, where undoubtedly over the centuries pressed the multitudes that were dispatched to Eastern Asia. The inhabitants of Assam, numbering 2,000,000, belong to a nearly pure yellow race. The Bengal, although presenting an extremely mixed population, preserves heavy traces of the first invasions--invasions which continued to spill out unimpeded over the fertile plains. In proportion as one descends towards the South, extending along the Bay of Bengal, one sees the yellow element more and more drowned out by the ancient dark layers; however, it is more recognizable in the plains, among the Santals, for example, than in the central mountainous region, where the Khonds, Paharis, and Gonds remain nearer to the primitive type, and where one can still find authentic descendants of the negritos of bygone ages.

Finally, in southern India, from Godavari down to Cape Comorin, live the numerous Dravidian populations along with their different groups, of which the most important are the Tamil group and the Telugu group. They represent the mixture of the yellow peoples with the negroes, but to which were joined much later still other elements and especially the Turanian element.

Before we talk about the Turanian invasions coming into the West of India, and in order to finish with the yellow races, we must say that the inhabitants of the high plateaus of the Himalayas and the valleys situated between this chain and the Karakoram, if one excepts those of the Cashmere, are composed of Tibetans, absolutely like their neighbors of western China. But, in this place we do not have to deal with the results of a violent and sudden invasion. These valleys and plateaus are less a part of India than of Tibet, from the geographical point of view, and the people who inhabit them have the same origin, customs and religion as those of the former country. Ladakh, Dardistan, Baltistan, Bhutan and a part of Nepal are occupied by Tibetans,

possessing prominent cheekbones and constricted eyelids.

Whereas one is unable to trace any exact time when the invasions which penetrated India via the "Turanian gateway" occurred (and one has not seen any descending down this route since the beginning of historic times), one does know, by means of their detailed accounts, the dates of a great many of those invasions which emanated from western Asia and which passed through the "Aryan gateway." However, the most remote invasions, such as those of the yellow peoples, are lost in the darkness of time and are known only by their ethnological results.

The Turanians and Aryans are the invaders who have left behind the greatest civilizing traces. In a general fashion, one can say that the populations of Hindustan owe to the first their bodily proportions and facial features, whereas they owe to the second their language, character, religion and morals. 170,000,000 Hindus speak Aryan languages, and yet only a very small fraction of this multitude is connected by blood to the pure white race.

The Turanians arrived first. They initially established their domination throughout all of the Indus basin and also in a part of that of the Ganges; then, as their numbers increased by the arrival of new bands, they advanced still further into the interior of the peninsula, and at length penetrated into the Deccan. With their approach, like what formerly happened with the yellow peoples, a pushing back process occurred, and the populations which were attacked, too weak to victoriously resist, took refuge in crowds within the mountainous and wooded regions which form the center of the Deccan.

It is, as we have mentioned, in this elevated massif of the center that one must seek out the last representatives of the primitive inhabitants of India, the proto-Dravidians or pure negroes. The most numerous and important of these peoples of ancient origin take the name Kol. They occupy the Chota Nagpur in the high basin of the Mahanadi River. They are divided into several tribes more or less Indianish, but the true Kols, who number about 1,000,000, have not yet adopted any of the customs or beliefs of the Dravidians who live in the valleys and plains.

The denominations *Kolarian group* and *Kolarian language*, borrowed from the name of the most remarkable among these indigenous peoples, apply to the majority of the inhabitants and idioms understood throughout the mountainous region which traverses across the peninsula from the Gulf of Cambay to the Ganges. It is especially towards the eastern part of this zone that the primitive peoples become evident in great numbers and unmixed. Near the sources of the Brahmani River, to the north of the Mahanadi, live the Douangs--Junglis or "people of the jungle"--who call themselves the most ancient of men, and are total savages.

We have just mentioned the Kolarian language. We must hasten to add that languages are not able more in India than elsewhere to serve as the delimitation of races. The people who speak the purest Kolarian idiom are not at all an indigenous people; it is the Santals group, which is very strongly impregnated by the yellow element. As for the Dravidian languages, they dominate in the South, and yet that is not where it is necessary to search for the most numerous representatives of the oriental Asiatic race which imported them into India. Finally, we see that, while the original Aryan idioms are by far the most widely prevalent, the peoples who can glory in having Aryan

ancestry are very much the least numerous.

When the white race, which we designate by name as the Aryan race, came its turn moved into India, it had to fight hardest, not the wild, timid, and lightly-armed populations, but the powerful States, extremely organized, which had been established by the Turanians. It first subjugated those of the Indus basin, and remained here a long time before hazarding into the West and South of the peninsula.

Fifteen centuries before Jesus Christ, the Aryans had not yet gone beyond the region protected by the Vindhya mountains. They had imposed their yoke over the Turanians of the North, for whom they created a third caste, that of the Vaisyas, which comes under those of the Brahmans and Kshatriyas, while the natives all went into a fourth lower caste, that of the Sudras.

It was about fifteen centuries before Christ that the Aryans undertook the great expedition that makes up the subject of the Ramayana, the Hindu *Iliad*. They advanced into the Deccan under the command of their chief Rama. After a thousand exploits they arrived to the utmost extremity of the peninsula, and compelled the inhabitants as far as Ceylon to recognize their laws.

The heroic accounts of the Ramayana relate that the Aryans had to fight formidable giants, and overturned with the help of monkeys the thrones of the powerful and magnificent monarchs of the Nagas, or worshippers of serpents. Without a doubt it is necessary to see in these Nagas the first Turanian conquerors who had established throughout southern India brilliant empires, and who in fact had been devoted, along with the ancient Dravidian populations which they had ruled over, to the cult of the serpents; and one can believe that the monkeys which lent Rama very useful cooperation were actually the primitive populations.

This expedition of the Aryans into southern India was in other respects more a military march than an invasion, and it hardly left behind any traces within the invaded region.

In the 2nd Century of our era occurred the first Turanian invasion which belongs to history, one by the Scythians; it was followed, during the course of the 4th Century, by that of a new people, probably Aryan, or at least of the Aryan family, the Rajputs.

These Rajputs, or sons of kings, as their name signifies, valliant warriors, all equal amongst themselves, made themselves recognized as the Kshatriyas, and established themselves throughout the region which extends to the east of the Indus over to the other side of the Aravalli Range, and which today still is called Rajputana.

We have seen that in the northeastern and eastern parts of India the invasions coming through the "Turanian gateway" had been made predominately by the yellow race, who mixed more or less with the negroes, and who later on submitted within the Ganges basin and in the Deccan to the south to the Turanian contact. We shall likewise summarize the results of the invasions arriving up to the 9th Century of our era via the "Aryan gateway," in saying that they delivered to northwest and west India Turanian races, soon submissive to an Aryan elite, and produced, in the same way as we have indicated, completely distinct moral effects from the



Soldiers of Cashmere

Cashmerians have been cited as one of the most striking populations of India due to their impressive physical type and fine skin, which is fairly white. Their women are renowned for their beauty. The Cashmerians are not very tall, but they are robust. Their noses are aquiline, and their hair and beard abundant.

Their character is more aggressive than courageous; their artistic aptitudes are quite remarkable. One may, from the point of view of ethnography, consider the inhabitants of the valley of Cashmere as the descendants of Aryan populations weakly mixed with the blood of Tibetans, at least those belonging to the higher castes.

physical and material effects.

If, starting from the north of the western region, as we have done for the eastern, we consider the Punjab, we see that the Jats, the Gujars and the Sikhs, who appear to be Turanian peoples, form more than three fifths of the population, and the rest, by the color of their skin, approximate the Aryans. Further south, we find the Rajputs, who are attached to the Aryan family, but are not at all a pure branch. The population of Gujarat is very mixed, but the Turanians are dominant here. The high plateaus which confine the Ganges basin to the south, and the Vindhya mountains to which they touch, mark the limit of the Aryan element. It disappears almost entirely below this region; but if it doesn't interpose itself upon the exterior appearance of the people, still the Aryan institutions and beliefs often remain preponderant. Beyond Bombay, on the double flank of the Ghats, is established a bellicose people, whose role was very important, the Mahrattas, of Turanian origin, numbering several millions. As one advances towards the center or descends towards southern India, the Aryan civilization and the Turanian physiognomy is found more and more in the mass of the Dravidian population. The mixtures, in quite different proportions, of these elements are the following: the Bhils, which the Rajput invasion drove back into the mountains, and who are proto-Dravidians very little modified by the Turanians; one recognizes in some of their tribes types belonging to the primitive populations; they occupy the western Vindhya, and total 2 or 3 million people; the Mahars, issuing a great deal from the Turanian Jats and inhabiting the northern chain of the Aravalli Range; they number about 600,000; the Minas, who occupy the Kingdom of Jaipur in the high basin of the Ganges, numbering 200,000 to 300,000; the Ramasis and the Dhangars, who occupy the slopes of the western Ghats, and who undoubtedly owe much to the Dravidian element which is called to mind by their dark skin, crushed nose and prominent cheekbones.

In the 11th Century of our era the invasions of India by the Moslem peoples commenced. Belonging themselves to origins most different--Arabs, Persians, Afghans, Moguls--these peoples augmented the extreme confusion of races which already existed throughout northern India. Their domination considerably changed the morals, beliefs, and civilization within the basins of the Indus and Ganges, but they did not intermix enough nor in sufficiently great number with the ancient populations in order for their triumph to mark the birth of any new ethnic group. One can only recognize them individually, in the same way as one distinguishes, without however being able to include them among the number of races of India, the Parsis of Gujarat and the Jews of Cochin.

We shall confine our classification of the populations of India to four groups: Kolarian, Dravidian, Turano-Aryan, and Tibetan, our general indications relating to the races of India. By their combinations in diverse proportions, these four groups have formed a large number of important races that we could study for a long time elsewhere, but that, for lack of space, we could not think about mentioning here.

With just the previous facts, what one would know about the races of India would truly be limited to a mere trifle, as this knowledge in a word would only amount to knowing pretty much where these peoples came from or the color of their skin. Furthermore, all the measurements of professional anthropologists add little to these superficial notions. We are now going to see, by

selecting from the preceding groups an example, how much more precise will be the information provided by the psychological qualities.

IV

The above short summary was sufficient to demonstrate how great are the profound differences which separate the races of India. The immense peninsula can only be likened to a vast mosaic composed of the most diverse peoples, from the most primitive savage to the civilized man, by way through all the intermediate phases. The generic name *Hindus* includes a collection of men where one encounters all the colors of the skin, from the negro to the white, at the same time as all the possible types of physiognomy falling between supreme beauty and extreme ugliness.

The moral and intellectual qualities of these races is not any less varied than their physical qualities. There is an abyss between the Rajput, renowned for his incomparable bravery, and the Bengali, known for his ignominious cowardice; between the highlanders of the Rajmahal Hills who never lie, and certain Hindus who always tell lies.

It must therefore seem legitimate to conclude at first that there does not exist any common quality between races so dissimilar, but we shall soon see that this conclusion will be erroneous, and that the mutual communion in the physical and intellectual milieu has produced certain general qualities. It is these common qualities which permit certain races to be brought together into the same family, just as the naturalist combines within the same class creatures so dissimilar as the elephant and the mouse.

Setting aside therefore the differences of detail, we shall now proceed to investigate the common psychological qualities that certain populations of India possess. We shall then see that these qualities permit the giving to the expression *Hindu* a decided meaning. However, it is not necessary to believe that this expression today possesses the exact and agreed upon value that, for example, the names French, English, or Germans have. The fusion between the diverse elements is not sufficiently complete. In order to clearly render our thought, we should recall the state of France under the Carolingians and what would have been then the value of the name French if applied in general to the melanges of Goths, Franks, Gallo-Romans, who had scarcely begun to amalgamate and by consequence hardly possessed any great general traits.

Before describing the common qualities belonging to the majority of the Hindu population and indicating the causes of their formation, we shall first try, from a psychological point of view, to gather into a small number of fundamental divisions all the numerous races of the peninsula.

A quick inspection soon reveals that all of these races can be psychologically grouped into three large main divisions. The first comprises those not belonging to any civilization which had ever penetrated India and who represent the last vestiges of the primitive populations. These populations, which one does not encounter except in the mountains or isolated districts, form a weak minority, and are much too different from the other inhabitants of the peninsula to be able to

combine and unite with them. We do not therefore have anything to occupy our attention here.

A second class is formed by the Hindus properly so-called, which resulted, as we have learned, from the union of white or yellow races with the primitive dark-skinned inhabitants of the country. More or less profoundly intermixed by the action of the centuries, they constitute, according to the proportions of the diverse elements entering into the mixture, rather dissimilar groups; but the identical conditions of the physical and intellectual environment to which they have been subjected during a long time, and the community of their beliefs, have imprinted on them a certain number of common qualities. It is these populations, forming the large majority of the inhabitants of India, to which the general qualities are applicable that we intend to research.

A third division includes those Moslem populations composed of a melange of Afghans, Arabs, Persians, Turkomans, Mongols, etc., who invaded India at different times and ended up conquering it. It would be difficult, if they had remained pure from any intermixing, to confuse them with the populations of the preceding class; but, concerning the fifty million people who profess Islam in India, there are undoubtedly very few who are exempt from any mixture of Hindu blood. Although they differ in many respects from the preceding Hindu populations, they have, in reality, been more influenced by them than not, and if all the general qualities that will soon be enumerated are not as applicable to them as to the others, many of these qualities are, however, common to the two groups.

The influences which have engendered the qualities common to the two preceding groups are altogether physical and intellectual.

The physical influences can be related in a few words: India has, on the one hand, a generally hot climate, not predisposing one to hard work, but which easily conveys the culture of the soil to which the greatest part of the population is devoted and, as well, an alimentary regimen almost exclusively vegetable. A Hindu hardly covers himself, has as his repast some vegetables, quenches his thirst with pure water, and largely lives on a few coins each day. With the elevated temperature of his country reducing for him clothing and nourishment to their simplest expression, he does not have, in order to bestir himself from his natural indolence, the goad of pressing needs.

These influences of similar physical surroundings and identical occupations have necessarily given rise to similar conditions of existence. Moreover, they have been powerfully fortified by the influences of an equally identical moral order; the most important are the caste system, the political constitution and the religious beliefs.

The caste system has been the cornerstone of all the social institutions of India for more than 2,000 years; it has such an importance that we dedicated a special paragraph to it in our history section of *The Civilizations of India*. We showed there what were the ethnological origins that gave birth to it in ancient times, and also the other causes which, substituting themselves gradually at first, have continued to maintain it with all its rigor over the ages. Further, we observed there how it divided India into thousands of small republics indifferent or hostile to each other, and too greatly separated by the divergence of their sentiments to have ever possessed

common interests; how it is not India, but his caste, that is the real father of the Hindu, and how it coops him up with a net of traditions and customs which heredity renders much too stable for him to be easily extricated.

The second of the above-mentioned influences, the political constitution, has contributed for a long series of centuries to fashion in the same manner the mind of the Hindu. One can simply define the long-time political system of India by saying that it is composed of small groups: the castes, joined together in small republics; the villages, submissive to the authority of a single master whose power is absolute. The name of the master varies, but the system never changes. It has lasted too long to have not made tractable all resistances, and to have not accustomed the Hindu to the idea, confirmed besides by his religious beliefs, that he owes absolute obedience to the law of a master.

The third influence of the moral order that contributes to the conferring of similar qualities to Hindus is that of the religious prescripts. A European cannot comprehend the omnipotence of this influence without having verified it with his own eyes. The most religious of men of the West always establish a certain separation between the sacred and the profane; but such a distinction is unintelligible to a Hindu. For this latter the Divinity intervenes in the smallest acts of his existence, and the regulations of religion constitute the supreme authority that manages all affairs. Religion is so much a part of his life that one can say that it is his life completely. Work, meals, sleep are religious acts. All that which is not regulated by religion does not exist for him; it alone provides him fixed rules of conduct, and it is with reason that one could say that the smallpox vaccine will only have a chance of being adopted throughout India when it will have become a religious prescript. In our work on India, in tracing the genesis of the religions we had the opportunity to point out to what extent they occupy the life of the Hindu, and also to what extent all that which represents any power whatsoever is considered by him as the expression of a divine power. From this point of view--like in other respects so many others--there is between the Orient and the West an immense abyss, and this abyss does not but deepen itself further each day.

Given the resignation of the Hindu and his passive obedience to the orders of his gods, given also that the same religious regulations have operated upon him for centuries, inasmuch as the religious laws of Manu have been the supreme laws of India for 2,000 years, one will understand to what extent minds submissive to such a uniform yoke are able to be cast in the same mold.

The action of the preceding major factors having been placed in evidence, let us now investigate what the general qualities are that their influence has created.

V

One surely cannot expect to find, among a people submissive for so many centuries to the physical and intellectual conditions of existence that we have indicated, the qualities of vigor and of character that belong to free men. If they had possessed them to the weakest degree, they would have a long time ago shaken off all foreign influence. It is not necessary therefore for us to be

astonished at encountering among the Hindus the shortcomings that one invariably finds in all peoples submissive for centuries to the yoke of a master. As a general rule, the Hindu is weak, timid, crafty, insinuating and dissembling to the highest degree. His manners are flattering and importunate; he is entirely destitute of feelings of patriotism. Centuries of tyranny have accustomed him to the idea that he must have a master, and so long as this master respects the laws of his caste and his religious beliefs, the Hindu is resigned in advance to submit to all his volitions, and feels happy if one allows him pretty near the handful of rice of which he has need to live.

The Hindus form a sweet and gentle population, patient, and absolutely resigned to their fate. Their most striking defects, for a European, are indolence, absence of foresight and an even larger yet absence of energy.

Absence of energy is the capital point of their character; it alone will suffice to explain how 250 million people bear without a murmur the yoke of 60,000 Europeans, that is to say a handful of individuals that they could annihilate in a day as easily as a cloud of locusts destroys a field of wheat, if they ever had the idea to rise up in mass; but such an idea Hindus would not know how to entertain. That some regiments of Sepoys, exasperated by bad treatment, revolted, like they did in 1857, was in reality nothing but a simple localized clash, to which the immense mass of the people looked on indifferently.

We shall soon see that in general the average intelligence of the Hindus is not in any way inferior to the average of the Europeans who dominate them, but that they are immensely inferior by their character. This reason alone will always assure their submission to the domination of the West. I say that it will always assure, because the more one thoroughly examines history, the more one studies men, the more one ascertains that character—or, to speak most clearly, *perseverance* and *will*—plays a much more important role in the life of individuals and peoples than that which the intelligence exercises. It is above all with character, much more than with intelligence, that one lays the foundation of religions and empires. A struggle between two peoples—the one composed of intelligent and educated men, but having necessarily the prudence and reserve that go with intelligence, knowing the futility of every ideal and consequently little disposed to great sacrifices to make triumphant any, and a people composed of fairly limited but tenacious men, ready to sacrifice their life without hesitation for the triumph of a belief—such a struggle, I say, will infallibly end in the success of the latter. I have several times insisted on this idea in various works, and do not know otherwise but to insist here again, because character supplies the key to understanding a great many of the incomprehensible historical phenomena. If Romans have dominated Greece, if semi-barbaric Arab tribes, sallying forth from their deserts, have conquered the Greco-Roman world, if Moslems have ruled India, and if, in our day, a handful of English maintain this immense empire under British law, the conquerors owe it much more to the strength of their will than to their intelligence. The most powerful of human forces will always be the Will.

To this absence of energy, so characteristic of the Hindu, is also joined a sort of fatalistic indifference which makes him view with calm eyes anything that does not affect the laws of his caste or his religious beliefs, and permits him to endure as an absolutely inevitable matter the most

merciless tyranny. The Hindu is not brave as we understand bravery in Europe; yet he has the largest contempt of life, and the fear of death does not shake him. He does not attempt to avoid it, the thing not seeming to him to be worth the anxiety. Moreover, his conviction is complete that any attempt to avoid death would be useless.

This indifference of the Hindu for the majority of things of this world results in the impossibility of his being affected by those factors that when put into play have so powerful an influence upon Western man. What manners and means of action will be taken by individuals as indifferent to life as to death, who do not feel dishonored by any of the punishments that our codes inflict, prison notably, and whose entire ambition is satisfied when they have gained the ration of rice necessary to their daily feeding? Whenever they possess the urge to act, it is not the promise of reward that is able to make them emerge out of their apathy. Offer a Hindu worker some amount for a job that you want to be completed by a fixed date, he will promise you everything that you desire, but will without fail break his promise. According to him, tomorrow belongs to a future too faraway and uncertain for him to worry about. The European who keeps company a little with the Hindus knows well that, if he wants to count on the porters, contracted by him from one day to another, the only way of surely finding them at the desired moment is when he compels them to pass the night sleeping before his door.

It is necessary to have studied the Hindus from this point of view, in order to understand how certain sentiments that appear to us very natural, because heredity has fixed them in us, such as those of *precision* and *exactness*, are unknown to certain races. At the debut of the railroads, the Hindus generally arrived at the stations two or three hours after the appointed moment for the departure of the trains. Their experience having soundly proven that the trains will depart without waiting for them, they now arrive two or three hours in advance. Their lack of exactitude is not modified; but one may say, in employing the language of the algebraists, that it is simply a change of sign. I have had dealings with Hindus of every rank and class--some of these same ones coming out of European universities--never did I ever succeed in finding one who was punctual to a meeting, whereas I have never succeeded in encountering an English person in India who stood in need of punctuality.

If we now consider the general qualities of the Hindus from the point of view of morality, we must, in order to support an equitable judgment, successively examine these people in their relations with the Europeans and in their relations between themselves.

Europeans in contact with Hindus justly complain about their dissimulation and their complete absence of veracity; but they forget that these are the defects inevitably inherent in the relations of a slave to a master. In their dealings between themselves, the natives are entirely different. If one assumes as a criterion of morality the degree of respect possessed by an individual for the morals, customs, and laws of his country combined with a spirit of tolerance and charity, one can say that Hindus of the common classes are much superior to Europeans of the same classes. I have been careful in saying Hindus of the common classes, because I have observed many a time this fact, contrary to what one sees in Europe, but which is far from being exceptional in the Orient, that the level of morality diminishes in proportion as one ascends the social ladder. It is absolutely nonexistent among a particular class, that of the Baboos, made up of

Hindus elevated by the Europeans. This last fact is most interesting by proving what it demonstrates: on the one hand how vain is the presumption which views that instruction elevates the morality of men, and on the other how a system of education adapted to the needs of a people is detestable when one applies it to another people occupying a different phase of evolution.

The charity of the Hindu is totally limited to the people of his caste, but in acting so he is only obeying his religious prescriptions. These are the same prescriptions that adjust the degree of criminality of acts to the value of the individual offended. According to the code of Manu, the smallest offense against a Brahman is a crime whereas the most grievous crime with regard to a Sudra is nothing but a slight offense.

To sum up with regard to the morality of the mass of the Hindu people, I do not know of anything better but to invoke the judgment, which I entirely embrace, of an Englishman, Professor Monier Williams, who has studied most completely the natives of the peninsula.

"I have not found anywhere in Europe," says this author, "people more religious, more faithful to their duties, more docile before authority, more courteous and respectful of the elderly and knowledge, more submissive to their parents. The Hindus have shortcomings and vices, but no more than the Europeans."

"I doubt that the worst Hindus are as vicious and as dangerous as the members of the corresponding European ranks. A ship captain of the Peninsula, who I asked if he preferred a crew of Hindus or a crew of English sailors, answered me without hesitation that he much preferred the former, because they are more docile, more obedient, less brutish in their habits and never devote themselves to habitual drunkenness."

We have just investigated what the general qualities are that one finds most frequently among the Hindus; it now remains for us to appraise the level of their intellectual aptitudes. The measure of these aptitudes naturally requires a scale of comparison; we shall take the European for our model.

So that this comparison is rendered possible, we must necessarily report on the similar and comparable elements between these two peoples; we shall then compare the Hindu of the middle classes with the European of the same classes, and the Hindu of the upper classes with the European of the corresponding classes.

With regard to the middle classes, I doubt that the most attentive comparison will be able to reveal a notable superiority in favor of the European. The Hindu possesses less spirit of initiative, he works less quickly than the European, but everything that he performs he is able to carry out without difficulty, and most often with fewer tools: works of wood, stone, and metal are crafted by him just as well as those made by the best European worker. The specialization of work, which tends to atrophy more and more the intelligence of the second, has not yet acted on that of the first. As far as artistic level is concerned, the Hindus have equalled and sometimes surpassed the Europeans in certain arts, such as architecture.

In the majority of social occupations only calling for average intellectual abilities, the Hindus are nearly the equals of Europeans; one finds among them lawyers, physicians, and engineers who are worth the average of ours. A Hindu will make a survey, conduct a locomotive, and handle a telegraph like a European. In the management of India by the English government: post offices, banks, public finances, railroads, etc., the immense majority of the positions are filled by Hindus.

It is only when we go up the intellectual scale to those entirely superior regions and arrive at those functions where initiative, the aptitude for associating numerous ideas and grasping their analogies and their differences, that is to say, judgment and the creative spirit, must be developed, that the inferiority of the Hindu clearly manifests itself in a visible fashion. To direct a big industrial enterprise, manage men, perform scientific research, and realize discoveries--in a word, to go forward without any other guide but himself is impossible for him. He can maneuver as well as a European the locomotive or the telegraph, but he could never create such inventions.

To summarize the preceding in a very clear way, I will state that given 1,000 Europeans taken at random, there will be at least 995 of them who will not be intellectually superior to the same number of Hindus also chosen at random; but what one will discover among the Europeans, and what one will not find among the same number of Hindus, will be one or several superior men endowed with exceptional aptitudes.

I have previously insisted elsewhere upon this important point--that the differences existing between the superior races and the half-civilized races do not at all consist in the average intelligence of individuals of the two races being unequal, but instead that the inferior race does not include any individuals capable of surpassing a certain level. This is a fundamental point of which one could find proofs solely on psychological reasons, but which I have attempted to base on anatomical reasons. I have formerly demonstrated, in fact, through research effectuated on a considerable number of skulls belonging to individuals of different races, that the superior races always possess a certain number of skulls having a vast capacity whereas the inferior races do not possess any.

If, descending from these philosophical generalities, we wish to determine how the Hindu of the upper classes differ from the corresponding European classes, we would see that he distinguishes himself above all by the absence of precision and exactness that he brings to all matters, by his lack of the critical spirit and deficiency in initiative, by the weakness of his judgment and reasoning, by the exaggeration of his imagination and by his astonishing incapacity to see things as they are--defects that by no means compensate for his great power of assimilation and a certain dose of logic. Moreover, this logic is limited to the aptitude of eliciting from a totally unique fact a series of consequences, and does not extend to the aptitude (source of exact judgments) of perceiving analogies and differences that one can infer from the comparison of several facts.

The abyss that separates the thought of a modern Western man from that of a man of the Orient is truly immense. The precision, the fixity of the contours of the first differ strangely from the transient and undulating forms of the second. It is in vain that from the immutability of the

customs among the Orientals one would infer an immobility about their thought. For the Hindu in particular, ideas and beliefs form a hazy mass of lines so wavering and undefined that in our Latin languages, meager in epithets but precise, terms most often fail to convey their meaning.

The lack of precision of Hindu thought is entirely characteristic. Not only do things without determined contours float for him in a sort of fog, but moreover one would say that they are views through deformed lenses having analogous properties to those sights seen in the mirrors of anamorphosis well known to physicians. The religious systems of the Hindu, his historical accounts and literary epics, are vague and bristle with contradictions that he doesn't even perceive. These contradictions, these conceptions with their always ephemeral contours, have rendered his religious systems, especially Buddhism, completely unintelligible to European scholars, accustomed to a rigorous logic and for whom words have a precise meaning. Conceptions such as atheism and polytheism seem to a Western mind separated by an insurmountable gulf; for a Hindu they are not at all, and conceptions seemingly so irreconcilable sometimes find themselves taught out of the same books.

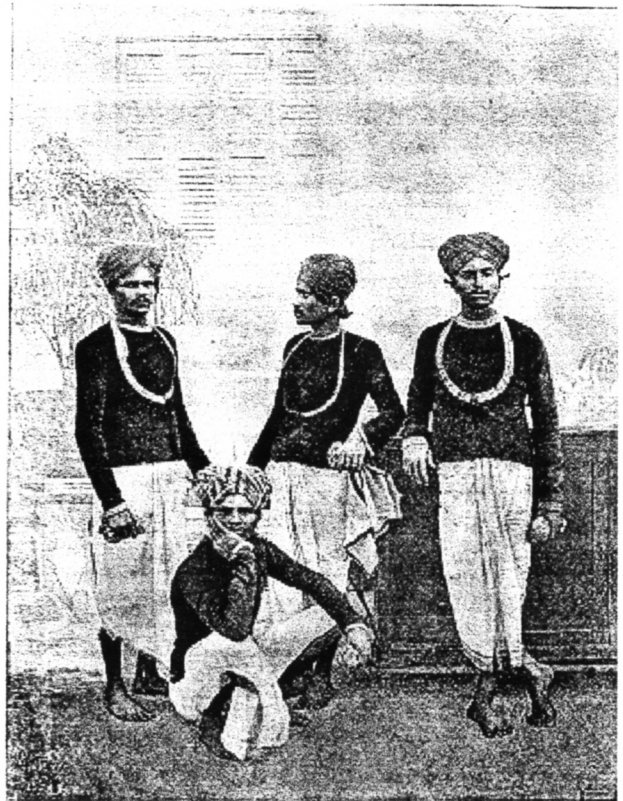
This lack of precision, these transient forms of thought, tolerable in a strict sense when it is a question of metaphysical speculations, poetry, and religious epics, become, when they are applied to subjects where precision is indispensable, quite shocking. They have prevented the Hindus from going beyond the most vulgar mediocrity in the exact sciences. To be sure the Hindus have easily assimilated what the Arabs in former times and the Europeans today have imparted on them, but they have never realized any discovery in this category of knowledge.

This lack of precision that I have just pointed out is such that, in the thousands of volumes that the Hindus have composed during their 3,000 years of civilization, there is not a single one containing any exact dates and which would be able to qualify as history. It is only by indirect means that modern science has succeeded in determining to a few centuries near the time in which their most celebrated sovereigns lived. As for the rightly so-called historical accounts, the astonishing aptitude of the Hindus to see things as they are not, a faculty which to them is not in other respects special and for which I would gladly create the term "distorted psychology," leads them to transform with the most perfect good faith events which they were meanwhile witnesses to. If we, for example, look up in the Hindu books the account of the fall of the empire of Bijainagar, fallen, as one knows, prior to the coalition of Moslem kings of the Deccan, we would read here that these Moslem kings were governors appointed by the Rajah of Bijainagar who revolted against their ruler and assassinated him. It is always in an analogous fashion that the Hindus write history.

The preceding psychological defects have not at all impeded the Hindus from attaining a very great superiority in the arts. They are therefore at the same time quite superior in certain branches of knowledge and very inferior in others. Nothing, besides, is more frequent. There often exists in the books of history and in the opinion of the crowd an individual or a people who are perceived as presenting a universal superiority in all branches of human knowledge. A slightly attentive study indicates how much such judgments are erroneous. There is not any superiority which implies them all, and there is very little in the intellectual order amongst which it is possible to establish a hierarchy. I well see how a mammal is superior to a fish, because I clearly see that



Woman of southern India preparing flat cakes of combustible dung.



Lower caste Hindus; palanquin porters.

the nervous system of the first is more developed than that of the second; but if I compare between two nervous systems two superiorities such as the ones of Phidias and Newton, of Descartes and Caesar, I do not see any way of demonstrating which one is the one that predominates. Artistic superiority is entirely independent of scientific superiority, and is also generally quite incompatible to it. In fact, it involves entirely different habits of thinking and feeling, different modes of conception about life and things.

These two superiorities therefore are met with very rarely among a single people.

The scientist analyzes phenomena and makes it his business to see things as they are, without any anxiety over their beauty or their ugliness. The artist and poet, on the contrary, makes it their business to embellish things, and their natural tendency--a tendency without which they would be neither artist nor poet--is to show them to us as they are not, or at least as they very rarely are. From this point of view, the Hindus are veritable masters; no other people have ever possessed such an exuberance of imagination, or, to be more exact, of amplification.

Summarizing what we have said in this article about the qualities common to the majority of Hindus, we are able to assert that the mass of the population is not inferior to the corresponding mass of the European populations, but that the former, unlike the latter, does not possess a certain number of superior intellects; that the Hindu people is in the majority totally destitute of energy, perseverance and will; that it is divided into a series of castes formed of thousands of groups, each representing a different nationality controlled by different interests. Similar conditions suffice to explain the role that India has played in the world and the one that she is called here to play again. Eternal slave, she is fatally condemned to always obey foreign masters.

*

*

*

Tightly limited by the space at my disposal for this Review, I have necessarily been obliged to restrict myself in the preceding to general indications, and for the details I refer the reader to my work: *The Civilizations of India*.¹ Additionally, I have supposed the problem to be determined, but I have not indicated ways to resolve it. I have summarily sketched, in fact, the mental constitution of the Hindu, or at least a certain class of Hindus, without talking about ways to carry out arriving at and discovering this mental constitution. There would be here ample material for a second article, but I shall spare the reader's patience and shall restrict myself to some lines about the methods of study which I have habitually employed.

The first of these methods consists naturally in the systematic observation of individuals in the midst of which one lives. I say "systematic observation" because it is only by a series of judicious observations that it is possible to come to an understanding of the principal psychological traits of the individuals that one frequents. While awaiting a questionnaire that will be for the study of comparative psychology what a thermometer is for the physician, it is up to each person to make for himself this questionnaire. It can be easily kept in six pages, but these six pages will

1 A volume in 4^{to} comprising 750 pages, with 350 engravings in black/white and color, from the photographs and aquarelles of the author. (Firmin-Didot bookseller).

have no chance of being worth anything unless their author has first devoted fifteen years of going off to observe different peoples of the globe. Regarding these fifteen years, he can well spend six, besides, trying to break the habit of thinking about all matters and things with the ideas of his country and his time, and coming to reason like a Chinese with a Chinese, like an Arab with an Arab; in a word to perceive during a conversation the ideas that the Chinese and the Arab imagine, and not the ones which he is accustomed to supposing himself.

The second method consists in carefully studying the popular literary works of a people whose psychology one desires to understand. I say "popular" because "non-popular" works--the epics and religious works--are always more or less fantastic conceptions, products of excited minds, which undoubtedly reflect the people's times or lives, though distorting them considerably. One can certainly draw something from the latter because, after all, the writer, whoever he be, is always the expression of the world which surrounds him, but a world which he finds necessary to resort to with extreme reserve. It is always otherwise with popular works: tales, legends, fables, and proverbs. They are the collective works of a people; and they are only popular precisely because they are the echoes of the experience of each on a given matter. It is only in such works that one is able to discover the spirit of an epoque, the dead ideas of a dead people. I have devoted an entire chapter in my work, *The Civilizations of India*, to reconstituting, utilizing this source of information, the mental psychology of the ancient Hindus.

To apply the methods which have been just set forth, it is not necessary to undertake some faraway journey: the comparative psychology of the European peoples is still to be done. Europe alone can be made to understand her people's destiny and history.

Dr. Gustave Le Bon